

"small talk"

official newsletter of
Club Olszewski, Inc.

ISSUE 8

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H A P P Y N E W Y E A R

We wish to thank you fans for your delightful comments regarding us and our newsletter. We appreciate hearing from you and it really tickles us that you enjoy "small talk". We are going to keep track of time spent preparing this issue.

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As an extra bonus and surprise this year, we decided to treat Bob's fans to something for which we have felt a great need, an appointment calendar to keep track of Bob's appearances. After all, who wants to carry around a newsletter 365 days a year? We are including one for each master member (hope you will share it with your spouse) while our supply lasts. We were hoping to have more dates for you to fill in, but at the time of printing only one appearance date was available. Don't forget to write in **May 2, Bob's birthday.**

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When Bob was young, the Olszewski family vacation was coming to Cleveland to visit relatives. Bob usually tinkered with some modeling clay on the drive up. Uncle Frank had a neat job being a barber because he looked clean and always had a wad of bills with him! This was success! A great job meant not having to get dirty like in the steel mills. Other "successful" uncles had jobs as bus drivers. Cleveland not only influenced Bob at an early age but also later on when "beyond Cleveland the adventure begins". This happened right after he married and decided to leave Pennsylvania and move to California.

The adventure is still continuing. After all, our Club originates in Parma, a suburb of Cleveland - it's a mini world!

Bob's favorite childhood memory was getting together with relatives. "In my father's family there were 5 brothers and 5 sisters. On my mother's side there were 7 children. On any given Sunday as many as 60 people would show up at our home for picnics. It was a loving environment of aunts, uncles and cousins - all having a super time!" What great memories of yesterday!

One of the questions we asked Bob while visiting California was, "What is your most prized possession?" Without a moments hesitation Bob stated, "My Family!" We had a feeling this would be his answer.

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A BOB STORY - While still in school there was a very "proper" girl in his art class. She didn't joke around and always stood there just like a lady. Bob just couldn't stand that and was always pulling practical jokes. Years passed. When it came time for the class reunion, Bob couldn't wait to see what had become of this "very proper lady." He wasn't at all surprised that this very proper young lady married a very proper Professor. Bob struck up a conversation with the proper Professor and asked what he had been doing lately. The Professor replied that he had been trying to get a book published on the history of something that was ultra boring, but he hadn't had too much luck. Bob couldn't resist giving this advice: "You need to add sex and drugs and you'll surely have a best seller!" That's our Bob!

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E. F. Hutton couldn't have a better listening group than our Club. We haven't updated our listing of "firsts" for awhile. The FIRST miniature figurine most of you selected to purchase was the Valentine Gift pendant. Dorothy would be proud, the Oz Series came in second. "Why do I collect?" You do so because of the fine detail, love of small stuff and naturally - BOB. We have added two new words to Webster's dictionary, miniaturely and collectoritis. Have you added any?

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It's really hard to condense a nearly two hour conversation with Bob into two pages, so we decided to edit less and give you an extra page. There is so much more we would like to print, but we can't use giggles or "don't tell that yet" and yep, even an occasional profanity!

The first step in preparing this newsletter is to transcribe the call onto our computers, and that's work!!! Taping the conversations have been extremely helpful, but we sure could use a Dictaphone to make that tedious job easier. It takes us a little over five hours of working separately to complete the transcription. We would never be able to give you Bob's exact words from just notes. This way, however, we're able to have Bob talk directly to each and every attentive mini FAN.

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Well, are you ready? Without further ado,

"HEEEEEEEEEERRE'S BOBBY!"

the Studio, only the A's and B's are left so quality is extraordinary. Eva is Quality Control and of course, nothing is going to get by her. I mean the quality, it's like we brought the old Studio back, it's terrific! We're already starting to see the effects of cutting down the run sizes in the market. Since I have been off loaded I am really back to where I was artistically. The collectors should see it in the work, there's no doubt in my mind about it. The word out for collectors is they should see me focusing on my work, that's #1. Number 2 is that we are doing fewer pieces in lower quantities. The numbers are low, particularly on the Nativity and the Poultry Seller and I think they have even underestimated Dorothy and Glenda. Even 'Homecoming' with being limited to only 2,000 will be hard to find. My fans are the core people and I want you to tell them this for me. They should really take note and find one dealer and really let them know about particular pieces they want.

Did I feel differently in recarving the Poultry Seller? Oh sure, I'm looking for more lyricism in the piece. The first one was a little bit stiff. I think I'd like you to talk about this. I love to take my figurines home, just like the collector, open them up, open the brochure, get a pair of scissors and cut the piece out of the bag, read the literature, and then put them in my showcase. It's a wonderful experience for me personally to do that because it gets me out of the business and has me look at it just like the collector does. When I set up the Nativity last night and took the Wolf out, I really saw the step in the art and the maturity. I am hoping to see this same thing in the Poultry Seller.

I'd like to discuss the secondary market price guide. I talked to Dick Hunt and he was in agreement that the codes should be a reflection of the market. With the new code of availability people should take it as being true. We also made adjustments in the value of some of the figurines. I want you to know the next printing will probably be the most accurate price guide that has been published.

The Studio changed me. I felt a responsibility for it, but I'm kinda out of that now. When this thing happened I realized I could give the Studio up. I came to the conclusion that my relationship with the kids and Eva, and my artwork is what's important. Those are the basics in life which give me the most pleasure. Of course my collectors are as important as they have always been. They have inspired me not only to give quality work but to add the AH HA factor. If I can do that, it's a neat thing! When I go for my walks or when I talk to Eva, I find I talk more about art than business and survival. We went down to see a wonderful Mexican exhibit at the LA museum. It was so good I took David, just the two of us went down on Sunday. I'm really getting into this non-stress level of living. Once you get back into that you'll never allow anyone to do anything to you like I had done to me before.

I want my fans to know I hurt my right hand on the last big trip I took. I came home with a ganglion cyst on my wrist. When I travel I take along a briefcase, a sample case and a garment bag. I go into the trip with 25-40 hours of carving for the week plus I sign for 7-8 hours a day. My hand is being traumatized out there and I'm starting to feel it. My hand finally felt normal after 4 days. I knew this would come. I really hate to do this but I must limit the signing and I hope my fans will understand this and respect it. I can't have signing ruin my ability to make a living. I still plan to do 20 shows this coming year, but the days of limitless signing are over. I'm not tired of signing, it's just I can't do it anymore.

The promotions were real strong this year, the people are really interested. I had no complaints at all about the shows, considering the economy. I can see that the economy is tough out there. I realize the dealers are under pressure. It's the worst I've ever seen it personally. I'm sorry I don't have more appearance dates to give you at this time.

Let me see, what else is going on? Oh, we got a cat and his name is Willie. I have scratches all over my hand and forehead. Meredith was down for Thanksgiving and she's doing real well. She called again today and guess what she needs? MORE MONEY! David got a 1968 VW van to go to the beach with and he paid for it with his paper route money. He's a good son, they're both good kids. Mom's doing just great. I talked to her over Thanksgiving and Ray was visiting with her. I asked her what she's doing? Just like Mom - she was home making raviolis. I think it's really behind her and when I look back at what it was like a year ago... but that's in the past and she's doing wonderful.

What does Bob want for Christmas? That's a good question, Eva keeps asking me that. I'd like to have some new casual flannel shirts for the cool evenings. I also want a lightweight dress jacket, a new sport coat and a casual jacket that's a little warmer than what I've got. In the house I'd like to have a nicer lamp for my carving studio.

Since David opted for his car on his birthday, he still wants a drum set as well as a drawing board for his room. Meredith wants a stereo and tape deck for her car and some clothes. Eva wants a weight bench.

This is a real nice time for us. My family is settled down and it's a very peaceful time of the year. It's just as sweet as it could be, I'm not kidding - I'm in the spirit.

You two have been great and I appreciate all you do for me. It's really fun to read your newsletters. It's neat to have the fans come up and give me their pictures you ask for on your applications. I carry them back and put them into my file. It's just so special to me."

- Robert Olszewski -

Did you notice in Bob's conversation there was no mention of Jack and the Beanstalk for the 1992 year? Jack couldn't make it up the beanstalk, but he might make the climb in '93. Also, the addition to the Wildlife series will be left in Bob's backyard and the Oriental addition has a commitment so, "Sayonara till next year".

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"We all have our little quirks and one of mine must have influenced Bob. I always told him if he was in town to call me if he was ever stranded or needed a friend in Cleveland. In May of 1989 I got THE phone call. After a nice dinner, I drove him to my home. Bob got the biggest kick out of seeing a Christmas card from Ferrandiz, a Spanish artist who's artwork is interpreted into ANRI wood carvings. I told him it had special meaning to me because this distinctive artist took the time and effort to send a personalized card to his collectors. Bob with his wit and humor said, "Well, did he ever come to your house?"

- Jacci -

This year we were especially pleased to see an *Olszewski* Christmas card! OOOOOOH! The Nativity Christmas card Bob mailed his fans this year is just overwhelming and the verse inside is genuine Bob Olszewski. Do you think Jacci and Wallie will display this card proudly all year long? You bet and it'll most assuredly be framed!

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BOB'S PROMOTION SCHEDULE

April 4 & 5th - International Collectors Exposition
Secaucus, NJ

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This newsletter closes out our second year. Hopefully you CHARTER members will send back your renewals and join in on another year of FUN!

miniaturely yours,

Jacci & Wallie

PS: "WE WANT A RAISE!" Our log indicates we need 6 days to recuperate because "small talk" is not such a mini undertaking after all. It has taken us 36 hours and 10 minutes, to bring Issue 8 to you. Now, time for a margarita break!"